

***Neo-Hollywood: A Broken Utopia Erasing the Human Spirit***

**An Honors Thesis (HONR 499)**

**by**

*Ty Stratton*

**Thesis Advisor**

*Elizabeth Dalton*

**Ball State University**

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## **Abstract**

The questions tackled in this film script deal with those concerning representation and how fragile the barriers between reality and an act really are. In this thesis I wrote four scenes of a dystopian film and analyzed the fallout of a film-icon obsessed world. The script follows main character and actor, Gunner, who runs away from a Hollywood he no longer understands in 2090. Leaving could mean freedom, but the risk is that he dies at the hands of a disillusioned population who are incapable of viewing celebrities as people. At the same time, he runs from a cult-like troupe of actors who are ensuring his safety in a compound hidden from the rest of America. Inspired by Jean Baudrillard's *Simulacra and Simulation*, I continue his postmodern comments on representation and how meaning is steadily being dissolved from the human spirit.

## **Acknowledgements**

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## **Process Analysis for Neo-Hollywood**

The *Neo-Hollywood* film script was created in during the spring 2020 semester for my thesis at Ball State University. Film is a genre that continually inspired my artistic endeavors during my academic career. The characters in the films, the screenwriters who wrote them, and the directors who envisioned them are all at the core of my interest to try my hand at writing a film script myself. Films that caught my attention the most are those that envision a future; I believe their sharp contrast with reality provides lessons that our time cannot. While futuristic movies can inspire a hope, they can also serve as a warning. In all of my other artistic works I have tried to conjure meaning to make people aware of our impacts as a population. I wrote *Neo-Hollywood* as a dystopia because framing its lessons within our time would not suffice. An audience needs to see a reflection of their future selves and hear the characters cry for help; it is jarring, and a much more explicit way of saying, “We need to change this.”

My goal is that *Neo-Hollywood* inspires transformational growth in its reader just as my favorite films have changed me. Its warning of the media’s influence and our heightened obsession with film icons is palpable in Western society. By building a world through the script, its dark corners become more menacing and its implications are more transparent.

## **Building the Story: Characters and Identity**

In 2018, as a final project in an honors colloquium, I built the beginning of *Neo-Hollywood*. At the time, I was concerned with an audience’s ability to see media personalities as humans. I still believe that while we are connected more than ever before, we are also the most disconnected. Communicating and deriving entertainment through screens has put up a barrier between us and our ability to be human. Writing done in 2018 was trying to express that

mortality would eventually be lost on us as we lived our lives through screens. From this idea, *Neo-Hollywood* was born: a future where our desensitization to violence has caused us to ignore the basic human rights of social icons. This thesis focuses heavily on how characters survive within this world and how they navigate its flaws.

While I have always enjoyed writing, a film script is entirely outside of my scope as a fashion major at Ball State University. At the beginning of this project, I reflected on my older writing style in 2018 and came to terms with my capabilities. For me, the characters, relationships, and dialogue are the most important pieces of a script. Through reflection I learned that my style is rooted in a dark humor with larger-than-life characters; suitably enough, my favorite films come from the Coen Brothers and Quentin Tarantino. While I had tried my hand at writing film scripts over the years, I never took the time to sit down and perfect one. One of the largest hurdles in the beginning was managing character identity. After looking back to my 2018 writing, I soon realized that the characters acted, talked, and behaved like me if I were in their situations. I had to learn to become detached from them, to allow characters to behave like themselves rather than me. This led to an overhaul of the script that caused deeper thinking of their relationships.

Over time, characters became less interested in giving comedic replies and grew in tune with their own sensibilities and goals. At the beginning I wrote down what characters cared about most and their goal for the script's duration: Gunner wants to escape *Neo-Hollywood* and recklessly burn bridges, Wayne wants a life for his daughter, and Rafe will have to come to terms with his fear that he masks as being protective. Whenever I struggled with how a character would react to a situation, I would look back to those notes. Instead of sitting idly by in a movie theater, Wayne puts his arm across his daughter in a paternal pose. Detail like this fleshed out

characters and made them wholly unique from others. Eventually I had the confidence to write the characters without constantly referencing to my notes because I understood who they were.

In all honesty, character names were chosen on a whim. In all my other art projects I focused too much on details like logos, names, and mood boards to start the project. At the beginning I was going through name generators online to find names. All I knew is that I wanted Gunner's name to be western, Wayne to sound like a best friend, and Daisy to be innocent. Rafe became an anagram for fear as I eventually understood his reasoning while exploring some of the script's themes. Funnily enough, I have used the names for so long that the placeholders they were will probably end up becoming permanent. They have grown on me, and the characters are so vivid in my mind that calling them by any other name would feel wrong. As an aside, the characters of Malcom and Falcon were the most fun to create because I was helped by my sister. I told her to give me a name for a good cop and a bad cop (the only limitation was that they had to rhyme). Her result was so creative that eventually I started to write dialogue that turned Falcon into a predator of the other characters.

However, as I wrote more and more characters, I feared that they would not get enough attention. From peer reviews and constructive criticism given, I eventually realized that not all characters are meant to have the substance of protagonists. With this being said, I still had to ensure that relationships between newly added characters and older ones were maintained and updated. Without this, new characters would feel dropped into the script without any context. Everything in the script should feel real to the world and a constant monitoring of the entire script is necessary to make that a reality. This caused a surge of rewriting as I went back to add subtle dialogue to hint at the introduction of a new character or event.

Adding even the slightest detail launched an avalanche of changes to the world. Once I decided that I wanted to introduce an American-Russian war, I knew all of the spots where I could build the idea naturally. To give you an idea, here is a brief list of those changes: 1.) the waitress in the diner mentions that the government pays for its upkeep, 2.) a radio show host mentions an updated story on Russia, and 3.) Rafe is told over the phone that the government is tired of using taxes on social programs rather than their military. The most difficult part about this process was getting started; however, once I had a reservoir of content, I found it to be exciting to world-build based on the writing I already had. Instead of being a chore to go back and add these minor details, it became enjoyable to see where I could reasonably insert them.

### **The Technical Aspects of Writing**

When I first started writing in the script in 2018, I made formats for scenes, action, dialogue, transitions, and scene headers in Microsoft Word. These survived well into April of 2020 until I decided to formally transition into screenwriting software for a more legitimate format for my script. The mechanics of screenwriting are so different from other formats that I used guides from online resources to learn what to do and not to do. One habit I had to shake myself from was adding clichés in my script. I was completely unaware of these clichés since I did not actively write film scripts. A vivid memory I have is that of following a screenwriter on Twitter who tweeted in disgust that his past writing featured phrases like, “there is a slight pause in conversation” and “conversation stops, there’s a tension in the air.” Obviously, it makes sense that there is a tension or pause in conversation; however, as a screenwriter it is not necessary to write it in. The valuable descriptions take form when the audience can clearly follow because of clarity in writing.

Not only did I have to be clear for an audience, but I also had to communicate effectively to the director reading my script. As a writer I cannot help but want extravagant spaces with incredible detail, but sometimes I had to restrict myself when taking a budget into consideration. Therefore, when I write about Rafe's bunker I refrain from making up specific details and instead left it to the future director. Other times, I had to realize that certain elements of my writing would not be realized in a movie. For instance, in one passage of my script I wrote that a ceiling in a motel smelled like cigarettes. Directors work visually, so smell does not matter and will not translate onto the screen for the audience unless a character makes a face or explicitly talks about the smell. My Achilles heel in writing was adding too much detail, and that detail was better off in a novel rather than a film script.

While writing *Neo-Hollywood* I realized that my style of writing offered itself more to a novel in chapters than a film in scenes. This realization came a little too late into the project and would have uprooted a lot of the work and research if I had decided to change genres. I wanted to write extensively about Rafe's bunker, the diner, and the streets of L.A.; however, most of my work had to be rewritten as I wrote entirely too much detail. To realize just how much I was overwriting details, I looked at scene descriptions for some of my favorite films. What I found out was that the complicated spaces in those films visually do not even come close to what was written. The lesson in this portion was that I had to give creative control over to directors in how they framed scenes and spaces as well as to actors in how they spoke dialogue. Instead of continually writing pauses in their dialogue, it is more important that they make the character their own and have a sense of creative control. The reason I would go back and write a novel is to have more creative control over the story.



I came to this realization while reading *Station Eleven* by Emily St. John Mandel. Mandel would spend an entire page describing how a person fell on stage during a performance and how the audience progressively reacted in the next page. Themes in *Station Eleven* helped build characters that were previously untouched. For example, Daisy's archetype changed immensely as I realized that she was representative of *Neo-Hollywood's* future. Her father (Wayne) wants the best for her future, Gunner wants her to try and revert to the past, and Rafe wants her for an evolution of his present cult. I did not finish the book because I was too excited in realizing who Daisy's character was. Adding her character at the beginning was just a way to make Wayne vulnerable. Being able to give her substance in relation to other characters gave me the motivation to look deeper into other characters.

Other research included reading scripts, a variety of screenwriting guides, and research done on utopias and dystopias. In order to start writing at the beginning of this semester I wanted to understand the genre. One significant piece of information that gave me the confidence to write within the dystopia genre originated from Alexander Wills's writing about the Dark Knight trilogy. I learned that architects of dystopias do not think their built society is evil. Their dystopia is evil from our perspective, but in their eyes it represents a reflection of who they are and, in most cases, reflects their version of a utopia. This helped tremendously in writing Rafe as I realized that he is not and did not want to commit inherently evil and wicked acts. I started to write his dialogue as if he was in control of his utopia. This erased all the unnecessary, malicious overtones I had written before the semester began. The lesson here is that no character should be written as evil or just, they should be developed through individual motivations.

## **The Finished Story and its Future**

When I sat down to talk over my proposal, I was discouraged from doing an entire film script; this was a blessing in disguise. As mentioned previously, writing a film script is a constant battle in adding organic details and characters so that the pacing of the script is not too fast or slow. During the semester, I forced myself to sit down and write each day in order to constantly keep the script in my mind. At the end of each session I would write down ideas, dialogue, or characters that I was unsatisfied with so that the next day I could pick up where I left off. Like everybody, I am not perfect and I took an extensive break for two weeks in the semester. However, when I came back to the script I had a fresh perspective on the writing. This inspired me to remake environments, add three new characters, and finish the last scene for my thesis. At the end of the spring 2020 semester I had the potential to write more but knew that if I added one more scene that the process of cleaning up past scenes and character interactions would go beyond a month. This is all to say that I learned not to be too hard on myself. If I had not taken a break, I do not think that I would be satisfied with the end result.

The result is four scenes when I planned for three, and a story that I can be proud of. I came into this project in a classroom setting because I wanted someone to constantly be behind me pushing me for my best work. The process of writing this film script has actually improved my writing; not only has my creative writing improved, but the conciseness improved as well. One of the aspects of film writing is being as clear and concise for the director or audience reading the script so that they can translate it to a screen. While I know there is an incredible amount of work before I could ever sell or make this script, I am happy with the quality of the work and proud to know it is within film industry standards.

The story was not able to be finished within the semester; however, there exists a brief synopsis for my protagonists' journeys in Appendix A. The beautiful thing about screen writing is that themes emerge and disappear as I write. The ideas I had are constantly morphing into something new with each draft. What I have written for the future of *Neo-Hollywood* is as prone to change as the script I started with in 2018. More than anything, this script accomplished the dystopia I had in mind and offered a growth for me personally. The world I created was a playground for all my concerns and worries that I have about our society. I hope that the worry offered to the audience inspires change.

## Works Cited

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NEO-HOLLYWOOD

by

Ty Stratton

@ Ty Stratton - 2020

FADE IN:

EXT. DINER - NIGHT

A billboard projects an actress flashing her smile for the #1 comedy on television. Time has peeled away her perfect teeth and the deserted Californian haven of culture no longer laughs. Hollywood, California 2084: no one is watching and everyone is watching. An underground bunker of actors lies hidden beneath the barren West coast. Its location has remained unknown for half a century, and the physical absence of icons has created an unhinged audience.

A diner's red sign flickers feverishly against the empty waste of the strip; a rare relic of a former America.

CUT TO:

INT. DINER - SAME

A 50-year old washed-up film legend, GUNNER, strokes his brow with anticipation. A lifetime of survival is written on the lines of his face; sun-spots from California sun dot his arms leading down to a watch mashing wispy hairs along his wrist. He tilts the watch's gold face towards his; he's waiting for someone. Besides GUNNER, no one is in the diner except for a night-shift staff.

Footsteps of MADELINE approach from GUNNER's right. From her general aura of disinterest, you'd think she had walked the diner's tiles for years. Her sneakers are clean white. GUNNER looks at the menu so as to not attract undesirable attention. One hard look at his face and his escape from the bunker becomes endangered.

MADELINE

(welcoming)

Hello sir, my name is MADELINE and  
I'll be taking care of you today.  
MADELINE puts napkin-rolled silverware  
on the table as she has done thousands  
of times before. GUNNER keeps his eyes  
on the menu.

GUNNER

Can you give me a second?

MADELINE

Can I get you a water while you wait?

GUNNER  
Water is fine, darlin'.

MADELINE gets closer to hear what was said.

MADELINE  
I'm sorry sir, can you say that again?

GUNNER realizes his mistake.

GUNNER  
A water. It's fine.

GUNNER looks at MADELINE innocently after his words but the waitress he had is now a fan. She recognizes the rugged charm that has captivated audiences for decades.

MADELINE  
(quieter)  
Can you say darlin' again?

GUNNER's facade slips and his jawline sharpens. MADELINE searches for his name as if recognizing him will complete her.

MADELINE  
(tripping over her words)  
Bullet Bill! I just got done watching  
you, Bill! Hollywood in this diner.  
Who would have thought?

GUNNER takes a deep look out the dirty window and back to his watch.

MADELINE (CONT.)  
What brings you to a place like this?  
We got everything good ole' American  
diners used to have. To tell you the  
truth we haven't had much business  
since The Hiding. Boss thinks it's  
because everyone is too busy watching  
you!

MADELINE's eyes weirdly fixate on GUNNER's mouth. She's desperate for any information on the bunker. MADELINE gets closer to GUNNER's ear.

MADELINE  
(whispering)  
Boss doesn't think I know that the  
government pays to keep this up.

MADELINE looks at GUNNER's face a bit closer now.

MADELINE (CONT.)

No one is coming in here with a pair of jeans and a trucker hat. They're all wearing suits and ties. Diplomats. They talk about that Russia stuff that's on the news right now.

MADELINE puts a finger to her lips. GUNNER scans the diner's interior. Behind the counter, and between a vague collection of American memorabilia is a small black camera with a faint red dot. GUNNER immediately shifts his face to stay within the confines of the booth.

MADELINE

I watch your movies all the time at home! After The Hiding they became so much more exciting. And real! Wow, are they real. It must be lonely all you actors hiding in...

GUNNER does not finish her sentence. MADELINE, with a knowing familiarity, pats the front of GUNNER's leather jacket with the back of her hand.

MADELINE (CONT.)

I know that darlin'. Hell, everyone knows that darlin'. But no one says it quite like you do. That's what you said to me. You called me darlin'.

MADELINE starts to violently tear up.

MADELINE (CONT.)

You got to understand. I'm just such a big fan of you, Bill.

MADELINE quickly puts down her pen and pad in front of Gunner and takes a step back that mimics the bravado of a performer. This is the longest GUNNER has endured a fan since The Hiding.

MADELINE

(crying through a disturbing imitation of GUNNER)

"A water is fine. Thank you, darlin'." I mean come on. I could never do it like you do. Just...thank you. You've



really done a number on me. Look at me. Could I have your autograph?"

GUNNER pushes her pen and pad to the edge of the table.

GUNNER  
Water's fine.

Looking disappointed in herself, MADELINE heads back to the kitchen. MADELINE taps on the shoulder of LINDA and points to GUNNER through a cutout in the wall that separates the dining room and kitchen. A black sedan parks just past the booth's window where GUNNER is sitting.

CUT TO:

INT. SEDAN - SAME

8-year-old DAISY is playing with an antiquated handheld video game in the backseat. The vivid colors dance off her blonde hair, fully illuminating her floating head as the only thing visible in the dark. DAISY can be engrossed in the game because of the safety her father provides. An 8-bit soundtrack dances within the humming car. From DAISY's position she can see GUNNER and the kitchen door that MADELINE walks in and out of.

CUT TO:

INT. DINER - SAME

GUNNER's stoic face is caught in the sedan's headlights. The figure inside is larger than what the driver side of the Buick can afford. The man sits gripping the steering wheel tightly. He turns to say something to a small figure in the back. The ignition is switched off.

CUT TO:

EXT. DINER - SAME

Feet lumber out of the cramped Buick. The suspension of the sedan bounces up. A pair of tennis shoes walk the broken pavement looking like the shoes could burst at any moment. The black sedan and puddle from a recent rain reflect the moon's shimmer. The beauty of the moon feels misplaced.

CUT TO:

INT. DINER - SAME

A bell next to the door rings as the figure enters the diner. The footsteps close in on GUNNER, until we see a figure slide into the booth across him. PULL UP. REVEALING WAYNE. WAYNE's burly body heaves to a halt. A pair of reading glasses dangle from the front pocket of his button-down. WAYNE slowly pulls the reading glasses from his pocket, swallowing them in his massive hands. Despite his size, he is careful not to break something so fragile.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - SAME

Fumes from the kitchen rise to the ceiling. A deranged MADELINE is mirrored by co-worker LINDA. Their faces are close, madness synchronized. Perspiration drips from their foreheads. A glass of water condensates between their intense, contorted faces.

LINDA  
(disbelief)  
Hollywood? Here?

MADELINE  
(all charm in her voice lost)  
Two of em'.

BACK TO:

INT. DINER - SAME

GUNNER  
You're late. And on-camera. It's government. Don't look for it.

WAYNE  
You don't think they're watching do you?

GUNNER  
They're always watching. As far as they know we're two old-fashioned Americans trying to relive the past. WAYNE is attempting to keep the conversation within the booth.

WAYNE  
She's looked at me too many times since I've walked in here. Has she

already pieced it together? Gunner nods to say their civilian disguise is already broken.

GUNNER

I need you here. Two celebrities are better than one. The story needs legs if we want to buy time.

WAYNE

It doesn't stop at an autograph and handshake anymore, GUNNER.

GUNNER

They tend to skip the handshake part nowadays.

A hand holding a camera appears from beneath the kitchen window. Fingers violently smash the top of the camera trying to take WAYNE and GUNNER's photograph. A flash of white envelopes the restaurant. The hand disappears below the window.

WAYNE

(stiff)

It's been a second since I've had to deal with these people.

GUNNER

I haven't got the whole song-and-dance yet. Well...I did.

WAYNE holds up his phone in his large hands to show the missed calls from the compound.

WAYNE

RAFE's looking for us. WAYNE peers down his glasses to the blue phone screen. BRUCE won't be the only hound he sends. That's a missed call from everyone. How do you know it's just BRUCE?

GUNNER

RAFE wouldn't risk the lives in the bunker. They're a ticket to his future. Relax, WAYNE. He's the only one looking. We can deal with BRUCE.

WAYNE looks up with uncertainty.

GUNNER (CONT.)  
DAISY is safe with us. I'm glad I  
never had kids. Too much worry.

WAYNE  
That changes once you have one.

CUT TO:

INT. SEDAN - SAME

The ending credits of a video game roll on the screen. DAISY rummages through a small knit pouch for another game to play. Her small hand turns the title of the new game towards her: Annihilation. She loads the cartridge into the handheld, making a click sound.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - SAME

A developing picture slowly slides out of a Polaroid on the kitchen counter. A hand takes the picture. From the shaking of the hand, and the delicate touch, you know this picture means more than it should. Just off-screen you can hear the clicking of a clip being loaded into a handgun.

CUT TO:

INT. DINER - SAME

GUNNER's old face starts to look beaten by a time he doesn't understand.

GUNNER  
Before The Hiding we used computers to  
make someone look older, younger,  
fatter; hell, we could have done  
anything. CGI. Have two of the same  
actor on the screen, even. They loved  
it.

WAYNE  
Yeah, well, they must have lost their  
imagination somewhere down the wagon  
trail.

A swinging door reveals MADELINE closing in on their table. The charm she had before is replaced with a mask of friendliness. LINDA slips through the door behind her. Silence.

MADELINE  
(focused on WAYNE)  
I don't think we've met. I'm MADELINE.

WAYNE  
(without eye contact)  
It's nice to meet you.

MADELINE extends a hand into WAYNE's face. WAYNE slowly looks up at GUNNER. GUNNER nods slightly. WAYNE awkwardly bends his arm to shake her hand. A smile broadens across her face. Without hesitation, MADELINE instantly shoots her hand out to GUNNER. The smile remains. GUNNER barely takes his hand in hers. She shakes vigorously anyways.

GUNNER  
(an uncharacteristic country  
accent)  
Now, darlin', you wouldn't mind  
getting us those waters. Maybe some  
lemons with those too?

I know you won't mind. MADELINE looks taken aback.

MADELINE  
(an unsettling tone of servitude)  
Well of course...sir.

MADELINE lingers a bit longer at the table with the same smile she had before. She leaves with an observant LINDA quickly on her heels.

GUNNER  
You know WAYNE, you acted a lot more  
confident in the movies.

WAYNE  
I'm just not used to it. Did she know  
your name?

GUNNER  
Yeah. But she knows me as

GUNNER changes into a heavily exaggerated western accent.

GUNNER (CONT.)  
*Bullet Bill*. Names don't matter  
anymore. GUNNER points to WAYNE's  
chest.

GUNNER

She doesn't see you, WAYNE. She doesn't care about what ice cream you like or which part of the zoo is your favorite.

PAUSE.

Just...act like you aren't WAYNE. You've been acting all your life surely you can do that. She's going to come back, I'm giving her the address, we walk out, we drive. Try not to act like prey this time.

WAYNE

We are prey. She looks like she could kill us.

GUNNER

She could kill us. She ain't gonna.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - SAME

The legs of LINDA and MADELINE can be seen running back and forth across the kitchen. There's a sense of urgency. The legs meet in the frame and stop.

MADELINE

(menacingly)

Find the fucking lemons, or I will kill you, LINDA.

CUT TO:

INT. SEDAN - SAME

DAISY is quickly mashing the buttons as red lights creep across the interior of the car. DAISY lasers the extraterrestrials on the screen.

CUT TO:

INT. DINER - SAME

WAYNE

I've been dying on screen for 30 years, I'm surprised I didn't fall for it.

GUNNER

(defeated and misunderstood)

Before The Hiding they were called  
snuff films. They were illegal. It's  
suicide.

WAYNE

It's cathartic. Imagine: you live in  
this upside-down world where your  
identity is the last character you  
played on the screen. RAFE offers an  
alternative where you go out on your  
own terms and you become someone that  
isn't a character you played for once.  
You become you.

WAYNE looks unsure of his words

WAYNE (CONT.)

Maybe we're behind the curve.

MADELINE hurriedly swings open the door and brings the waters  
to the table. Again, LINDA follows after her. In anticipation  
of what was to come, MADELINE spills water on the table.  
GUNNER and WAYNE exchange looks. There are no lemons in the  
glass.

MADELINE

Can I have both of your autographs?

MADELINE tosses a napkin down on the table and shoves a pen  
in GUNNER's face. LINDA is mopping the floor behind WAYNE.  
Her eyes fixated on their reactions.

GUNNER

(looking at his glass)

No lemons, huh.

MADELINE

You don't want to sign it. Do you?

GUNNER looks down at her apron to see a bulge in the pocket  
that wasn't there before.

GUNNER

I'll sign it, darlin', just give me a  
second with my friend here.

MADELINE

(unsettling charm)

I'm sorry about the lemons.

MADELINE leaves the table for the kitchen. Once again, LINDA on her heels.

WAYNE  
GUNNER, she has a gun.

GUNNER  
I saw it.

WAYNE  
That was our chance. You just missed it, GUNNER. GUNNER why didn't you...

GUNNER  
(breaking WAYNE's words)  
We have to take risks, WAYNE. The fans will show up at the compound if I give her the address...but if she uses the gun...that gives us more time to escape. The fans wake up tomorrow morning to morning news of MADELINE telling them RAFE's address...AND a gun went off.

GUNNER acts like a TV anchor.

GUNNER (CONT.)  
This just in: GUNNER and WAYNE give up the greatest kept secret in America. The icons we've compulsively obsessed over for half a century have finally been found!

GUNNER puts his hand to his ear as if he's listening to a feed.

GUNNER (CONT.)  
Sorry folks...one sec...and a gun? A GUN? We have footage? Stay tuned folks!

WAYNE starts shaking his head at GUNNER's insistence.

GUNNER (CONT.)  
Think of how much publicity this gets. Fans will have to show up to the bunker. It gives us time. It'll be the first time being on camera has actually helped us.

Footage from the surveillance camera plays GUNNER and WAYNE



for a moment. WAYNE stands up to leave.

WAYNE

Not around my daughter.

GUNNER

Sit down. She ain't gonna use the gun  
on us. She's at her boiling point, but  
she isn't about to spill over on us.

INT. SEDAN - SAME

DAISY's face becomes enveloped by a deep red light that is vaulting inside the car. Her mashing of the button quickens. Causing more carnage. Quickening. Quickening. Until: an echoing gunshot physically shakes DAISY from her trance. The dark red flashing cascades to the floor as DAISY loses grip of the video game. She presses her trembling hand against the glass and watches MADELINE walk through the kitchen door.

CUT TO:

INT. DINER - SAME

MADELINE walks swiftly through the swinging door with gun in hand. Her apron has LINDA's blood splattered across it. You can see blood and brain glistening against the kitchen wall through the cutout. MADELINE is talking with the gun as she walks.

MADELINE

(mumbling while walking)

I told her to find the lemons. I...I  
told her to find the fucking lemons.  
And she couldn't find them.

MADELINE focuses on the standing WAYNE.

MADELINE (CONT.)

Oh, I am so sorry! Sit, sit, sit.

WAYNE sits slowly. MADELINE pulls up a chair to their booth and sits down with WAYNE and GUNNER.

MADELINE (CONT.)

Listen. LINDA...she's a real dunce.

MADELINE mimics a dumb person by twirling the gun around her ear.

MADELINE

Always has been. I tried to get you those lemons for your waters...she might have a loose lightbulb up there. MADELINE waits for a laugh with a wide smile. Silence.

MADELINE

(convincing herself)

I had to make an executive decision. Of course the boss makes those decisions `round here, but when in the presence of Hollywood. In front of Hollywood. You have to make those decisions you don't normally make. You understand?

GUNNER

I'll sign it.

MADELINE

You will?

GUNNER

I'm gonna' give you something I don't normally give to fans, MADELINE.

INT. SEDAN - SAME

A dim glow from the game shows DAISY's face against the window. Tears are beginning to swell at the sight of WAYNE at gunpoint. Her upturned game continues its muffled cacophony on the floor of the sedan. MADELINE says nothing. She's intensely focused on GUNNER's next words.

GUNNER

I'm going to tell you where we live.

MADELINE's body and head sway back as if the information physically gives her a sort of whiplash. MADELINE drops the pen and notepad weakly next to GUNNER.

GUNNER

Now my friend and I...We've got to get going. So once I give this to you, you're going to have to let us go. It's fine though, darlin', `cause you'll be seeing us real soon. It's where we hide. Do ya get it?

MADELINE nods up-and-down real slow. Like any deviation from

it could break the fantasy she was living in. GUNNER scribbles RAFF's address on the napkin, pushes it to the edge of the table, and grabs WAYNE by the arm to leave. The camera zooms in on the napkin. MADELINE hasn't moved as they walk out the front door.

CUT TO:

INT. RAFF'S COMPOUND - DAY

A figure sits in a salon chair within a makeup room. A script is held loosely in his hand. He turns his head to the small T.V. nestled among innumerable hair products. MADELINE is on T.V. explaining how she saved GUNNER from a crazed LINDA in the diner the night before. She explains how GUNNER gave her the address as a reward for stepping in and saving them from being killed by LINDA. RAFF picks up the remote and turns off the wall-to-wall coverage the media is giving of their hiding place. The bright bulbs from the mirror show uncharacteristic strain across his perfect face. His silver hair is saturated in hair products, making its shape stick when he sweeps it back. He lights a cigarette and exhales a plume of smoke as he looks at himself in the mirror. He'll sacrifice his health to maintain the look. ENTER SNIDEY. SNIDEY walks slowly towards RAFF with a pen and paper notes in hand. Her gray hair is put in a disheveled bun and a pair of cat frame glasses rests on her crooked nose. A holder strap for the glasses falls on her hunched shoulders that reveal overly poor posture. SNIDEY pores over her notes before a croaky voice says:

SNIDEY

(definitively)

I've called the police. They can't help us.

RAFF

Make them care.

SNIDEY

Persuasion isn't really in my wheelhouse. You don't even listen to me. I just keep track of things.

RAFF

Did you talk to MALCOM specifically?

SNIDEY

I did.

RAFE

What about FALCON?

SNIDEY

I'm not talking to FALCON. SNIDEY walks away as slowly as she came in before briefly turning once more towards RAFE.

SNIDEY

What about your last act? It's coming up.

RAFE

I have an entire compound to take care of and you want to talk to me about my last act?

SNIDEY

Last month you told me next month. Now it's next month. You can't keep pushing it back. It's on the schedule. She turns the schedule so that RAFE can see it

RAFE

I don't want to see it. We'll reschedule. Get out.

SNIDEY

(mumbling as she leaves)

Always so ungrateful. You give me a job, I do my job. It's on the schedule, it has to happen eventually.

RAFE flicks the cigarette into an ash tray. As SNIDEY leaves a group of stylists come in behind her to assemble RAFE's disguise. A mustache is glued above his upper lip. A bald cap masks his silver hair as tufts of hair are glued to the sides. The stylists maneuver around him as he reads the script in his hand with arms outstretched.

A vault door twists. Mechanical gears turn. A lock releases. RAFE walks up metal steps towards the sound outside. RAFE is dressed like a balding suburban dad taking his son to a museum.

RAFE opens the door of the main house to a myriad of concerned faces from his acting troupe. All of them look as though they were frozen in time hurrying to finish a last minute detail, preparing a calculated performance. The house

feels fake, as though it's currently on sale and has a viewing scheduled for later in the day. RAFF motions them to move from the entrance of the door. He gives the script to a trembling hand and opens the front door to:

EXT. RAFF'S COMPOUND - SAME

Police are directing traffic at a stop sign before RAFF'S road. Police officers are leaning against their cars chatting against a suburban dream of a backdrop. Its upkeep is done by the government; everyone else is too busy watching to mow, jog, or pick the mangoes from the trees.

News reporters are frantically giving details of their current location and MADELINE'S interviews from morning shows can be heard coming from the cell-phones of onlookers.

There is a panic, but this panic is controlled. The fans are all here for the same thing. If the direction of traffic is any indication, this crowd is organized, and their excitement is visceral.

RAFF stands disguised as suburban dad: GRANT. GRANT, in a plaid button-up, khakis, and circle frames, opens the door to find his suburban nightmare: neighbors. If it was church or throwing the baseball with his son, small talk GRANT could do. This was not one of those times. From GRANT'S stiff walk down the driveway to his gate, you can tell he is terrified.

All at once, everyone charges GRANT. Mics from various local news stations and hands from the eager fans thrust between the bars of the gate. Some want autographs. Others want only to touch Hollywood. Everyone stops talking to hear the words of one reporter.

REPORTER #1:

Sir! Sir! Channel 3 News, Los Angeles! Are you RAFF?

GRANT

(hands on hips)

No. My name's GRANT. What's going on out here?

The cacophony of sounds erupts again. GRANT staggers backwards.

REPORTER #2

Do you mind, GRANT, if we could have a tour of your house to confirm this is not the location of Legacy Films's

acting troupe.

GRANT

RAF...what are you...? I don't think that's a good idea, fellas. This morning's for bible study. Please get away from my gate...

The crowd erupts again in incoherent noise until another reporter's voice silences the rest.

REPORTER #2

RAFE is the famous director of Legacy Films. You must know of him. Is he here?

RAFE

RAFE? The man who is hiding all the actors? Of course not! Look at me. Do I look like a RAFE? We don't watch rated "R" movies at this house. Have a good day.

GRANT turns back to the house as deafening cries beg for a look inside the house. As the realization that he's going back inside hits the crowd, no one makes a movement or sound. Everyone begins to watch. The crowd waits for the door to open. They all lean to see inside to no avail.

INT. RAFE'S COMPOUND - SAME

A number of faces strategically hidden from windows and the door look for relief in RAFE's face. The transition from GRANT's fear to RAFE's own shows little to no change. The expressions on the faces have a silent conversation with RAFE, a conversation about betrayal, fear, and saving DAISY.

RAFE

I'm going to need LIONEL.

A small boy is taken from the room by a few stylists who need to freshen up his look. RAFE waits a second longer before going back outside to assume the role of GRANT.

EXT. RAFE'S COMPOUND - SAME

GRANT pulls flip-phone from his pocket. He brandishes it in front of the crowd as he walks down his driveway. GRANT looks for a response from the police behind the crowd.

GRANT  
(fed up)  
I will be calling 911. (pause) You all  
heard right. Get off my property. Now!

The crowd looks behind them to the parked police cars. A police officer gives them a thumbs up.

Glass shatters in the yard. The crowd turns back around to see the new development. GRANT immediately twists his body to see his son. His son is holding a baseball glove, a bat lays at his feet, and a baseball-sized hole splits the front window of his home.

GRANT  
(quickly, frantically)  
What would Jesus do? What would Jesus  
do? What would Jesus do?

SON  
Daddy I'm sorry. I just saw the news  
people...and...

GRANT breaks. He fast walks over to his son. GRANT's shadow blots out the sunlight, covering his son in darkness. GRANT bends over and spansks his son in front of the crowd. The crowd is visibly unsettled. His crying son runs inside.

CUT TO:

INT. RAFE'S COMPOUND - SAME

LIONEL runs to the back of the house and into the open arms of the acting troupe who quietly console him. Whispers of "it's okay" and "they'll be gone soon" can be heard. He's led down the stairs RAFE walked up earlier.

CUT TO:

GRANT returns to the crowd, more upset than before.

GRANT  
Turn off the cameras! Turn off the  
cameras! The stunned crowd slowly puts  
down their phones and cameras. Mics  
from the reporters drop. Some mouths  
are agape.

GRANT  
(justifying)  
Now...now...how I raise my children is

between God and me. I don't...I don't go around telling you...you all how to...ooh point the camera like this and ruin someone's morning like this. What the heck are you all doing anyway? You're just...in front of my house ruining our time with God. Get the heck out of here! All of you!

The crowd slowly dissipates at these words. Some remain glued to GRANT's actions. There's a quiet murmur as they walk away. GRANT walks back in his house and slams the door as the final piece of his act.

INT. RAFE'S HOUSE - DAY

The faces look for and find RAFE's relief. RAFE takes off the circle glasses worn a moment before and throws them against the wall.

RAFE  
GUNNER, GUNNER, GUNNER. WAYNE, WAYNE, WAYNE. They gave the fans our address and now we're all in danger.

The crowd of actors flinch at the possibility of dying for the fans they continue to serve.

RAFE (CONT.)  
(caring)  
That mob out there could have trampled through that gate and raided our home. They would find that antique watch passed down from your great-great-great grandfather. They would take your child's first piggy bank that they've been putting pennies in. They would scour your life and only find collectibles.

RAFE walks over and cups LIONEL's face. The child looks terrified after seeing such a large group of fans in one place.

RAFE  
Our children are in danger. We fight for them. The sweet little faces of future Hollywood. They'll carry us into the future after we're long gone.

The sound of their children having futures is enough to ease



the group of faces from the chaos outside.

RAFE

Now I know that GUNNER and WAYNE are family, but DAISY is a collateral damage we cannot afford. Your child is our child. WAYNE's daughter is our daughter. I'm not sure about you all, but I won't let my daughter get torn apart by the fans.

RAFE's words are inciting a twisted courage in the faces of his audience. Everyone get back in the bunker.

RAFE (CONT.)

No one is to be above ground until I give the okay.

The crowd exchanges a murmur of words as they file down the stairs back towards their living spaces. BRUCE walks up to RAFE's shoulder. BRUCE has been eating up RAFE's words the entire conversation. His enthusiasm matches that of a new military recruit. The buzzcut suggests he could be military, or that he has played the big-bad army generals in the movies. In this world, the fans couldn't tell the difference between the two.

BRUCE

(whispering in RAFE's ear)  
What do you want to do?

RAFE

(to BRUCE only, menacingly)  
Take DAISY away. Kill GUNNER and WAYNE.

As BRUCE walks away RAFE takes out the same flip phone he used outside and dials FALCON.

RAFE

Why didn't you help us?

FALCON

You devil, I was just about to call you. MALCOM told me that SNIDEY called him and not me. Can you pass along that my feelings are hurt?

RAFE

You tend to be difficult to deal with.

FALCON

Funny you should say that. I was thinking the same thing about you. Where's your last act?

RAFE

I can't die right now. The bunker needs me.

FALCON

It isn't dying, RAFE. What do you tell them, again? It's for your "legacy."

RAFE

I still have one to make.

FALCON

There's some irony in there that I don't really have time to unpack. The fans are running on E, RAFE! They need a big last act.

FALCON waits for RAFE to say something about his last act.

They are starting to get out and walk on streets again. Cause traffic. Mow their lawns. Walk their dogs. That means more crime, more government intervention, taxpayer money going to things that...aren't the military. War is on the horizon, RAFE. We could really use a big film to hold the fans over.

FALCON begins a Kennedy impression

FALCON (CONT.)

Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you...

RAFE closes the phone and walks down towards the bunker.

CUT TO:

EXT. LOS ANGELES STREETS - MORNING

GUNNER and WAYNE sit in the black sedan. Neither looks ready to face the challenges of leaving the motel. If Hollywood were hell, the motel provided them with a semblance of a limbo. Being mobile was the cardinal sin they'd have to break to have a future. A morning show blares from the radio.

PETE

Now I know my fans have heard the word. No not the bird. The bird most definitely is not the word today. This is 95.2, and this is the newest in news.

An intro track plays from the radio in preparation of news. WAYNE looks to be on edge from the sound alone.

PETE

Before we get into our daily coverage of the U.S., Russia military conflict, we have something special today. Well, how about this? Can you believe this? The gun slingin', bad guy killin', action megastar GUNNER just so happened to be seen last night. Oh and WAYNE...let me see. WAYNE GREEN.

A sad trombone effect plays after WAYNE's name.

WAYNE

Oh...give it a rest.

PETE

I'm surprised he's even on the list. They must have made a new category of actors. This is a z-list actor, folks.

WAYNE has a thousand-yard stare out the windshield.

PETE

Hey JOHNNY! They must have made a new alphabet for this guy!

WAYNE

(smiling)

I mean you did say you didn't want to be an actor anymore.

PETE

Do we have a treat for you all today. JOHNNY bring in MADELINE would you?

GUNNER and WAYNE both look at the radio and then at each other. GUNNER slowly turns up the volume. A clapping track plays to introduce MADELINE.

PETE

Hello, darlin'. You did say he called

you darlin', right?

MADELINE

He did. You know the way he does it.

PETE

Well, congratulations. What an accomplishment for you. I know all the fans are proud to have such an established fan as yourself.

MADELINE

Not only that, but I even have the lampshade from Bullet Bill.

PETE

The lampshade?

MADELINE

You know that lampshade from that scene where...

PETE

I think what MADELINE is trying to say is she has a lampshade. A laugh track plays after his words.

PETE

We don't care about filtering light on 95.2. You're here to illuminate us, MADELINE.

JOHNNY

(in the background)

Good one, PETE!

PETE

Are you ready to play?

INT. VAN - DAY

BRUCE is on the hunt for the escapees in downtown Hollywood while 95.2 plays in the background. He flexes his bicep in the side mirror. Unsatisfied, BRUCE rolls down the window and pulls the side mirror towards himself. He flexes his bicep again. Satisfied with his physique in his tight-fitting tank top, he rolls back up the window and grins. Coincidentally, GUNNER's black sedan is on the opposite side of the intersection.

PETE

(radio)

It's played like this, MADELINE. I ask you a question about your rendezvous with red carpet royals and you give me an answer. Now, audience, she's hooked up to a lie-detector. So we know this information is valuable. We only get the truest of true on 95.2. You answer a question with truth, you stay in the booth. If you answer a question with a lie...well...

A gunshot plays over the radio.

PETE

(laughing)

Let's start with a practice round. Who did you see?

MADELINE

GUNNER and WAYNE GREEN.

INT. SEDAN - MORNING

GUNNER and WAYNE sit at a stoplight in downtown Hollywood.

WAYNE

We have to get off the roads, GUNNER. The fans know we're mobile. He'll ask about the car.

GUNNER remains silent. He knows he's taking a risk.

PETE

(radio)

See that wasn't so difficult, was it? Question #1. What kind of car was he driving?

MADELINE

A Buick that was...

PETE

(loudly)

Save the suspense, MADELINE!

GUNNER

We won't make it. Get out.

WAYNE

GUNNER it'll draw too much attention.

DAISY looks out the window at the busy intersection. DAISY has never seen so many people in one place.

INT. VAN - DAY

BRUCE scans the intersection with the information provided from PETE's interview.

PETE

(radio)

Question #2. What color was the Buick?

MADELINE

(quickly)

Black.

A loud clash of metal rings out from the other side of the intersection. BRUCE's eyes lock-in on GUNNER's Buick opposite his van. GUNNER, WAYNE, and DAISY bolt from the vehicle and run away from the intersection. Everyone in the cars behind the Buick slam their doors in a culturally trained unison. BRUCE launches open the van door, striking the adjacent car. The force alone fuses the two doors together. A man in the seat of the car next to BRUCE is violently trying to open his own door. Muffled desperation is being yelled at BRUCE from behind the window as BRUCE runs to finish RAFE's assignment.

ZOOM OUT ON INTERSECTION:

EXT. DOWNTOWN HOLLYWOOD - DAY

All of the car doors in the intersection are flung open. The mob of 9-5 workers runs in the direction of the escaped celebrities. The only movement left in the intersection is a group of fans looting the black Buick for collectables.

ZOOM IN ON RADIO IN BUICK:

PETE

Question #3. What was the license plate number?

MADELINE

Hang on. I...I know this.

PETE

Not according to our lie detector.

A gunshot echoes over the radio and a thud is picked up by PETE's mic.

PETE

Might have to replace the lightbulb on this one.

A laugh track plays.

PETE (CONT.)

Can you believe her? A lampshade from Bullet Bill. Get her out of here, JOHNNY.

CUT TO:

EXT. DOWNTOWN HOLLYWOOD - SAME

GUNNER, WAYNE, and DAISY run from the ravenous fans. DAISY begins to lag behind, so WAYNE picks her up and runs. BRUCE fires a gun from the back of the crowd. This frightens the concentration of fans from their heels, but a small number of fans continue their relentless pursuit. Without flinching, some fans seem to prefer death than to give up chase. GUNNER ducks into a theater and leads the group inside a movie.

INT. MOVIE THEATER - SAME

GUNNER looks intently at WAYNE and DAISY. They know they have to start to blend in. They walk in a dark theater where credits roll down the screen.

GUNNER

Sit down near the back. Go. They walk past a few movie-goers towards the exit.

DAISY

Why are we in the movies, Dad?

WAYNE

Why are we in the movies, GUNNER? Out of all the places to hide you want to hide in here? The movie theater?

GUNNER

No one watches credits. We'll be fine. Stay put.

INT. MOVIE HALLWAY

BRUCE walks slowly down the hallway. A small group of fans have started shouting their predictions on the group's whereabouts.

FAN #1

I bet they're here to watch Bullet Bill! Isn't that the movie MADELINE said they were going to go watch?

FAN #2

No MADELINE said she had a lampshade from Bullet Bill. Fan #1 Why would someone have a fucking lampshade from Bullet Bill? That's a waste of money.

FAN #2

They aren't here to watch a movie, you idiot. They were running from us.

FAN #1

I don't know, man. It looked more like a I'm-excited-to-see-Bullet-Bill kind of run.

FAN #2

And what kind of running is that?

FAN #1 swings his arms back and forth and runs in place to an onlooker of fans.

FAN #2

Do you even know how to run?

FAN #1

(aghast)

Really, man?

The fans enter the Bullet Bill theater to find the group.

BRUCE is peeking into different movies in the hallway. He's reserved. He knows who he's going to find. And they know who's looking.

INT. MOVIE THEATER - SAME

WAYNE has his arm across DAISY in her seat in a paternal pose. GUNNER is looking for any sign of trouble from either entrance of the theater.



WAYNE

Do you think he's here?

GUNNER

If RAFE sent anyone, it was BRUCE.  
BRUCE is the only one stupid enough to  
look for us in a wave of fans.

DAISY

(loudly)

BRUCE is here? He can help...

WAYNE puts his hand over DAISY's mouth and puts a finger to his mouth to silence her. The group of fans can be heard searching the theater to their right.

BRUCE enters through the door of a theater. He is silently walking down the hallway. The red exit lights reflect off his combat boots. GUNNER motions WAYNE and DAISY to leave through the exit.

WAYNE

(quietly)

You can come with us.

GUNNER

I'll follow after.

WAYNE takes DAISY's hand and creeps down the steps towards the exit. A hand with a gun from the hallway of the theater becomes visible and takes aim at WAYNE and DAISY. Before it can fire, GUNNER throws a knife hidden in his leather jacket and nicks BRUCE's arm. The gun slides across the carpet of the theater.

GUNNER

I'm up here, mongoloid. BRUCE looks  
down at his bleeding bicep.

BRUCE

(menacingly)

You hit my bicep.

GUNNER

I guess RAFE will just have to CGI out  
your scar from now on. They would have  
had to use it anyways, your muscles  
never were big enough.

BRUCE

You know you put the bunker in danger,

right?

GUNNER

Look at the big boy using his brain.  
Did you think of that yourself or did  
RAFE think of it for you?

BRUCE sprints up the stairs towards GUNNER, taking two steps at a time. GUNNER lifts his leg and kicks him all the way back down to the bottom of the theater. In a freakish way, BRUCE gets right back up and continues his sprint towards GUNNER at the top section of seats. BRUCE tackles GUNNER and pushes him through the glass of the projection room. GUNNER kicks his opponent into the controls and starts slamming his face into the soundboard.

A group of heavily-armed police in black protective gear kick down the door of the control room and put a crashing halt to GUNNER and BRUCE's fight. Both of them are now being swiftly cuffed on the floor while they lay on their stomachs.

BRUCE

Wait, wait, wait! I'm with RAFE! I'm  
from the compound.

MALCOM steps from behind the officer apprehending BRUCE. MALCOM is as plain as a man could be. If he weren't in police gear you would think he was just another fan. From his tone and warped sincerity he probably is.

MALCOM

BRUCE, I hear ya. I do. But, uh,  
FALCON wants to see you.

At the mention of FALCON, GUNNER grits his teeth as handcuffs are being slapped at his wrist. Both GUNNER and BRUCE are stood up by officers who are holding them from behind as MALCOM stands in front of them.

BRUCE

(talking to cops)  
RAFE told me that we have a deal with  
you guys. We make the movies and you  
help us out. Help us! GUNNER kidnapped  
our daughter!

MALCOM

I totally understand, BRUCE. It has  
been all over the news. You two have  
been through a lot. Unfortunately, we  
just need a little more from the

troupe.

GUNNER

The police didn't protect the compound this morning?

MALCOM gives a fake smile and sucks in air to indicate a no.

MALCOM

Well, see, we directed traffic. That's about it. FALCON just thinks you guys owe us right now. You know with the war going on. You're going to help us make a movie!

BRUCE

About?

MALCOM

Well. Russia is giving us some problems. They are copying our population control with media and starting to funnel trillions into their military. It's scary stuff.

GUNNER is looking through the window of the control room down towards the exit sign. He is thinking of WAYNE and DAISY.

MALCOM (CONT.)

We just need a little war propaganda. Nothing serious. I was actually only expecting to find GUNNER. But you. BRUCE you're known for the big bad army generals. It's great. You can both be in it.

GUNNER

I'll be in it only if you stop hunting WAYNE and his daughter.

MALCOM

Well, GUNNER. You aren't really in a position to make decisions right now. Buuuut, we do really need your talent in this movie...I'll call the boys-in-blue off. If you refuse to act, I'll have to pass what happens next to FALCON. He's better at hunting people than I am.

GUNNER and WAYNE are escorted out of the room and driven to

the police station of Los Angeles.

MALCOM

(talking to officers)

Great job today guys, you really  
killed it!

END SCENE

## TENTATIVE SYNOPSIS

GUNNER and BRUCE are brought into Los Angeles police station by MALCOM. WAYNE and DAISY escape via underground railroad member that watched the news and found them. WAYNE and DAISY are taken to their end destination.

CHANG is capable of erasing people's past and giving them a new one; this includes every aspect of identification (social security number, ID, etc.). He works in an underground railroad for celebrities trying to escape Neo-Hollywood. WAYNE and DAISY bunk at CHANG's place and meet a person from Neo-Hollywood that just wants to leave.

GUNNER sits in an interrogation room along with BRUCE. GUNNER and BRUCE butt heads philosophically on the best way to protect the troupe. FALCON explains the propaganda film and BRUCE agrees to star and direct in the film. GUNNER refuses to control populations any longer and is dragged into a cell.

RAFE arrives at the police department and interrogates GUNNER on WAYNE and DAISY's location and what his plan was. GUNNER chooses not to give up their location and is tortured. CHANG has done research and relays to WAYNE that his identity cannot be easily erased. His prominence in global culture is too strong to be shaken. Knowing this, WAYNE risks his life to go save GUNNER. WAYNE leaves DAISY with CHANG so that the fans can not readily identify her to ensure her process of re-identification is successful.

BRUCE is starring in the movie and enjoys being the big bad army general. The movie uses real POWs from Russia and kills them on-screen while highlighting the valor of BRUCE. Killing the defenseless POWs does a number on BRUCE. BRUCE begins questioning his reality.

SNIDEY calls WAYNE to tell him when BRUCE's movie is going to be released, as well as her fear that Russia will attack the west coast. WAYNE plans to be near the station when the attacks happen.

The movie with BRUCE gets released and the west coast is bombed. WAYNE helps GUNNER from his cell and they both escape back to CHANG's place. RAFE shows up with some government soldiers and tries to overpower WAYNE, GUNNER, and CHANG. CHANG is apprehended while WAYNE, GUNNER, and DAISY manage to escape with their new identifications and instructions from CHANG.

RAFE wakes up CHANG and threatens to kill him if he does not give him a new identity. CHANG explains it would be

impossible for a person of his popularity. RAFE explains he does not care where he ends up, he wants out of Neo-Hollywood.

BRUCE shows up at CHANG's house and kills the government soldiers and points the gun at RAFE. BRUCE explains how he was manipulated by RAFE. He is obviously distraught from killing the prisoners of war in the film and the devastation caused by being in the propaganda film. BRUCE looks unhinged before killing RAFE and then himself.

The last scene shows GUNNER, WAYNE, and DAISY escaping from the war and heading east.

## Appendix A

*Neo-Hollywood: A Broken Utopia Erasing the Human Spirit*

“‘A Clockwork Orange’: Kubrick and Burgess’ Vision of the Modern World .” *Cinephilia &*

*Beyond*, 2017, [cinephiliabeyond.org/clockwork-orange-kubrick-burgess-vision-modern-world/](http://cinephiliabeyond.org/clockwork-orange-kubrick-burgess-vision-modern-world/). Accessed 27 Jan. 2020.

This source discusses *A Clockwork Orange* in depth and will supplement my reading of the dystopia screenplay. There are interviews with Stanley Kubrick within this article that challenge my preconceived notions of where I wanted the script to go. Namely, Kubrick disagrees that violence in media creates killers. Instead, he posits that it’s an excuse for politicians to pin economic and social issues on without actually doing anything. At the same time, the article talks about how copy-cat killers started in the Britain after screenings (Kubrick pulled the movie from theaters in Britain). When writing *Neo-Hollywood* I should keep this assertion in mind and give adequate answers for how a society came to want to see *real* violence on the screen.

Afra, Kia. “PG-13, Ratings Creep, and the Legacy of Screen Violence: THE MPAA Responds to the FTC’s ‘Marketing Violent Entertainment to Children’ (2000-2009).” *Cinema Journal*, vol. 55, no. 3, 2016, pp.40-64. *Gale Literature Resource Center*, [search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=mzh&AN=2016130221&site=ehost-live&scope=site](http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=mzh&AN=2016130221&site=ehost-live&scope=site).

This source explores how the Federal Trade Commission investigated Hollywood and its marketing practices of showing violent content to children. This was investigated through concepts such as “ratings creep” where a rating’s definition needed to be adapted due to studios abusing the parameters of the rating system. This is yet another way to explore how *Neo-Hollywood’s* dystopia came about. Kia Afra’s journal suggests that studios are consistently trying to circumvent violent labeling from rating systems, which in turn means that audiences lose meaning of the ratings. This is a crucial part of how representation could be distorted in Hollywood.



Couvares, Francis G. "Introduction: Hollywood, Censorship, and American Culture." *American Quarterly*, vol. 44, no. 4, 1992, pp. 509–524. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/2713213](http://www.jstor.org/stable/2713213).

Accessed 27 Jan. 2020.

This journal article by Francis Couvares covers Hollywood's responsibility and role in creating passive audiences through censorship. The article covers area of film theory that deal with how Hollywood created an inactive audience by treating them as consumers; as well, it discusses how this process of censoring may have affected their critical thinking outside of just being an audience. *Neo-Hollywood* is based in a world where the audience has lost sight of what is real; it is important to understand Hollywood's part in creating inactive audiences today to write about what they could become in the future.

"How to Write a Screenplay: The Basics." *NYC Midnight*, NYC Midnight, LLC.,

[www.nycmidnight.com/howtowriteascreenplay.htm](http://www.nycmidnight.com/howtowriteascreenplay.htm). Accessed 27 Jan. 2020.

*NYC Midnight* is a website that hosts competitions as well as guides on screenwriting. This specific guide deals with all of the details that play into writing the script. These include: scene headings, action lines, character descriptions, etc. Each section is accompanied by an image that shows an example of how that specific detail works on the page. This website will give me technical guidance in completing *Neo-Hollywood* formally as if I were pitching it to producers.

Kubrick, Stanley, et al., directors. *A Clockwork Orange*. Warner Bros, 1971.

*A Clockwork Orange* is the dystopia film script I will be researching for *Neo-Hollywood*. The obvious learning points will be from seeing a film script in full; however, the biggest concern in writing this film script is that the details in *Neo-Hollywood* will not be sufficient enough world-building. *A Clockwork Orange* is a masterclass in this; the film, based on the book by Anthony Burgess, has a futuristic society with a different language, culture, and government from any we currently live in. *A Clockwork Orange* will be used to effectively build a future for *Neo-Hollywood*.

Lepore, Jill. "A Golden Age for Dystopian Fiction." *The New Yorker*, The New Yorker, 29 May 2017, [www.newyorker.com/magazine/2017/06/05/a-golden-age-for-dystopian-fiction](http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2017/06/05/a-golden-age-for-dystopian-fiction).

Accessed 27 Jan. 2020.

Jill Lepore writes of America's increased fascination with dystopia media. The conversation includes literature and film of the past and present. References are made to how utopian concepts such as Communists, eugenicists, and Fascists produced dystopia literature such as *Brave New World* and *1984*. This source will serve as another example of how characters within my script need to see their world as a broken utopia. In addition, this article reminds the writer to expound the societal fears current populations face in order to write an effective future.

Mandel, Emily St. John. *Station Eleven : A Novel*. First ed., Alfred A. Knopf, 2019. Accessed 27 Jan. 2020.

*Station Eleven* is a dystopian novel that takes place after the "Georgia disease" has killed a majority of the world's population. The novel follows a troupe of actors and musicians as they travel the Great Lakes Region. Their goal is to keep alive the remnants of art and culture that existed before the plague. Not only is this novel a dystopia, but it has similar variables to Neo-Hollywood. This reading gives me insight into actor culture and how to write dystopian details. Emily Mandel's novel offers a similar plight to the one being executed in *Neo-Hollywood*: why and how do we keep a dying culture alive?

Meyer, Timothy P. "The Effects of Verbally Violent Film Content on Aggressive Behavior." *AV Communication Review*, vol. 20, no. 2, 1972, pp. 160–169. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/30219752](http://www.jstor.org/stable/30219752). Accessed 27 Jan. 2020.

The above study gives a quantitative look at how film and television affects the behavior of individuals. The hypotheses tested in the research were: 1.) angered subjects viewing verbally violent television content will be more aggressive than angered subjects viewing a nonviolent film and 2.) angered subjects viewing verbally violent television content will be significantly more aggressive than angered subjects viewing no film. This source was chosen to test the waters to see how translatable behavior from the screen is to the individual. How much does what we see on television shape our behavior? *Neo-Hollywood's* dystopia is built on viewers not being able to assign meaning to what they see. Exploring television and media effects was a natural choice.

Simon, Samantha J. "Hollywood Power Brokers: Gender and Racial Inequality in Talent

Agencies." *Gender, Work & Organization*, vol. 26, no. 9, Sept. 2019, pp. 1340-1356.

*ProQuest*, doi:10.1111/gwao.12365. Accessed 27 Jan. 2020.

Samantha Simons interviews Hollywood talent agencies in this article to determine the depth of their influence on audiences as well as on how media is represented. Unsurprisingly, the conclusion is that Hollywood's barrier of entry for white males is low while that of minorities is higher. The source for this issue lies in talent agencies and how their decisions hold an incredible amount of weight in representing who America is. For Neo-Hollywood I'm looking for a source of how audiences and culture came to a point of disregarding actors and actresses as humans capable of emotions. This idea that Hollywood is "reproducing itself" is ambiguous, strange, and flexible enough to be molded into a reason as to why *Neo-Hollywood's* dystopia struggles with seeing people for who they actually are.

Wills, Alexander. "Dystopia in the Dark Knight Trilogy: How Utopian Ideas are Warped and

Corrupted in Their Application." *Film Matters*, vol. 9, no. 3, 2018, pp. 155-167. *JSTOR*,

search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=mzh&AN=201915862379&site=ehost-live&scope=site.

Alexander Wills's article details the process leading up to utopia and dystopia. The work argues that what defines a utopia and dystopia is not the result, but the acts done by the architects of the society leading up to the utopia or dystopia. This point is shown through the lens of Christopher Nolan's Batman trilogy. This reading helped me understand that dystopias are not inherently evil to the architect; they are utopias created through immoral acts. With this in mind, Rafe, the person who revels within the dystopia in *Neo-Hollywood*, should be defined or given a moment to show his true intentions within the three scenes that are written. This moment should show a glimpse into his unrealized utopia within the frame of a broken process.